



Punkatasset Preserve



Hutchins Pond



Division of Natural Resources
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The Conservation Land

Punkatasset Preserve is rich in natural diversity, geology, and the recorded history of Concord. The name Punkatasset is an Algonquin word given to the prominent hill in this conservation land, a smoothly rounded glacial drumlin formation. Other glacial evidence includes eskers, or serpentine ridges of gravel and sandy drift formed by streams under glacial ice, and glacial erratics, large boulders randomly dropped as the ice sheet retreated.

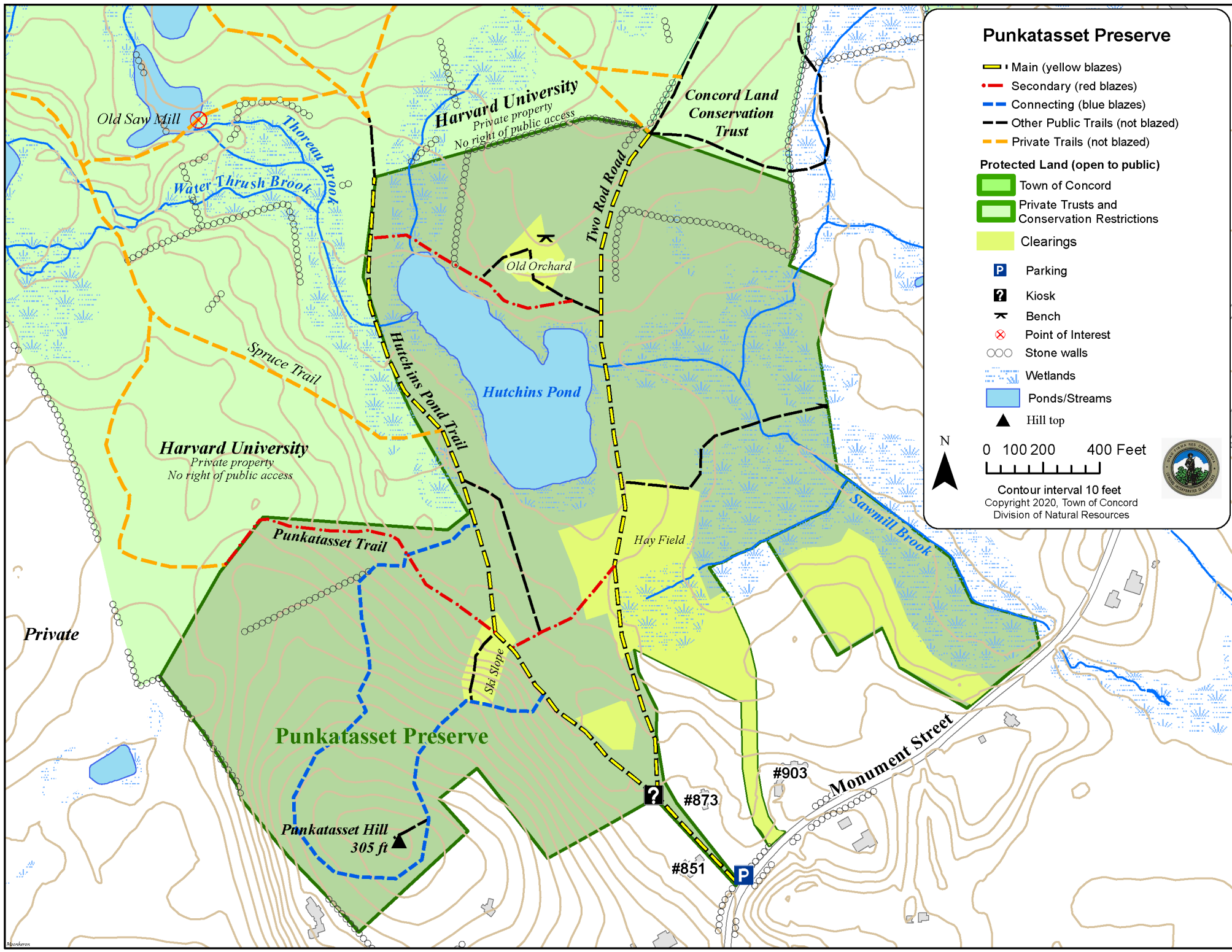
The centerpiece of Punkatasset Preserve is Hutchins Pond, a man-made pond formed for harvesting winter ice in days before refrigeration. Today the pond, inhabited by beavers, offers peaceful views on walks along the trails that loop around it.

Location and Access

Access to Punkatasset Preserve is from Monument Street with parking available on the west side of the road. The entry walkway is on a gravel drive, walk straight ahead to an information board for the conservation land.

Please park courteously. Observe posted no parking zones. Respect neighbor's driveways. Do not impede emergency vehicle access.

Dog Owners: Dogs must be leashed at all times and away from private yards and buildings. It is the duty of each person who owns, possesses, or controls a dog to remove and dispose of any waste left by his or her dog.



Punkatasset Preserve

- Main (yellow blazes)
- Secondary (red blazes)
- Connecting (blue blazes)
- Other Public Trails (not blazed)
- Private Trails (not blazed)

Protected Land (open to public)

- Town of Concord
- Private Trusts and Conservation Restrictions
- Clearings

- P Parking
- ? Kiosk
- ⛶ Bench
- ⊗ Point of Interest
- Stone walls
- Wetlands
- Ponds/Streams
- ▲ Hill top



0 100 200 400 Feet

Contour interval 10 feet
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Points of Interest

The original Punkatasset conservation area consisted of 92 acres acquired by the Town in 1971. The eight acres of the

Saw Mill Brook land were purchased in 1990. These lands are blazed with Concord trail markers. The 99-acre Punkatasset Preserve adjoins Harvard's 675-acre Estabrook Woods, as well as fields, wetlands, woods, and a few house-lots. Together with surrounding conservation lands, this creates some two square miles of protected land, one of the four or five largest protected natural areas in the Boston Region. Many valuable forest-interior species thrive in this large natural area.

Hutchins Pond and Saw Mill Brook

Hutchins Pond was built in the early 1900s when Gordon Hutchins dammed Saw Mill Brook. Originally used as an ice pond to supply cooling for Hutchins' dairy products before the use of refrigeration, it is today the centerpiece of



Hutchins Pond in winter

Punkatasset. A concrete foundation at the outlet of the pond into Saw Mill Brook is all that remains of the cutting and storage of blocks of ice. Once a popular summer swimming spot, the habitation of the pond by beavers has made that a health risk from waterborne diseases. Beaver periodically enter Punkatasset from the southeast or northwest. Evidence of recent activity includes a lodge, chewed tree bases, cut and peeled branches, dam and tiny pond, dead and fallen trees from flooding, and cut stems large and small. Trail flooding is avoided by "beaver deceiver" structures that prevent damming. These are designed so that

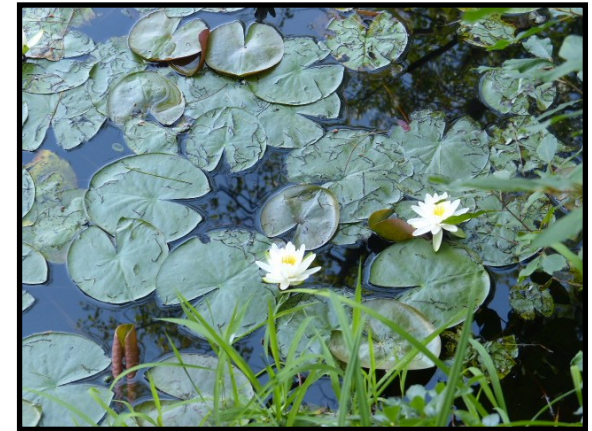


Evidence of beaver activity

beavers have adequate water to perform to maintain all life functions, and water is low enough to stay below the height of the trails.

Other animals include wood duck, wild turkey, great blue heron, woodpeckers, brown creeper, frogs, bullfrogs, deer, and red squirrel. Plants include fontinalis water

moss, chestnut, hazelnut, maple-leaved viburnum, water lilies, poison ivy, wild grape, low juniper, alder, sugar maple, prominent climbing bittersweet vine, large sumacs,



White water lilies

alternate-leaved dogwood, pignut hickories, and a large black locust stand, probably planted after the loss of American chestnut to a blight in the 1920s.

Old Orchard

The remains of an apple orchard can be found north of Hutchins Pond off the red blazed trail. The trees are very old, bearing few apples. But the orchard is a restful place to sit on the bench conveniently placed for relaxation.

The open areas, both small and large, in proximity to woods help support multi-habitat animals that regularly use two or

Punkatasset Hill and Sledding Slope

The drumlin called Punkatasset by indigenous Americans played an important part in the American Revolution. On April 19, 1775 Concord families and Minutemen gathered on the open-top Punkatasset Hill, while British regulars advanced into town. Seeing smoke in town, the Minutemen hastened to the North Bridge, where a fateful conflict occurred.



Glacial erratic

The glacial drumlin hill stands as a landmark, with glacial erratics especially abundant and conspicuous. In modern times, the hill has been a winter favorite of youngsters for sledding. Ski teams even practiced here at one time.

Suggested Walks

Hutchins Pond Loop

From the parking spaces along Monument Street, walk along the drive to the “Punkatasset” sign board where the main yellow-blazed trail forks left and right. Take Two Rod Road to the

right side of the signboard through a wooded downhill section that opens into a hay field before following alongside Hutchins Pond. After crossing the outflow spillway from the pond, take the next trail to the left, which in a short distance is blazed red. Follow the red-blazed trail, crossing the pond inlet on bog bridges, before joining the yellow-blazed Hutchins Pond Trail. Turn left to return to the signboard and the starting point of the walk at Monument Street.



Punkatasset Hill Climb

From the parking spaces along

to the “Punkatasset” signboard where the main yellow-blazed trail forks left and right. Take the trail to the left side of the signboard to the junction with a blue-blazed trail on the left. Follow the blue trail up a steep grade past an open ski slope to the summit of Punkatasset Hill. Continue on the trail as it rounds the top of the hill, and back down a more gradual downslope.

At the junction with the red-blazed trail, turn right back to Hutchins Pond Road at the base of an open ski slope, and continue back to the signboard and the starting point of the walk at Monument Street.



Punkatasset Hill